



To the most Reverend Fathers in God,
 William Lord Archbishop of Can-
 terbury, Primate of all England
 and Metropolitan, and John Lord
 Archbishop of York, Primate of
 England and Metropolitan.

JAMES R.

Most Reverend Fathers in
 God, We greet you well.
 Whereas the bold abuses and ex-
 travagancies of Preachers in the

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Pulpit, have not only by the experience of former Ages been found to tend to the Dishonour of God, the Scandal of Religion, and disturbance of the Peace both of Church and State, but did also (through the Licentiousness of the late Rebellious times) much increase, to the inflaming, fomenting, and heightening of the sad Distempers and Confusions that were then among us: and whereas even at this present (notwithstanding the merciful Providence of God, so signally manifested in restoring our Royal Family, and the Lawful Government of these Realms, and putting an end to the great Rebellion, and notwithstanding the pious care and endeavors of

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of Our late Dear Brother, and Our
 Self ever since, to Govern Our
 Realms in Peace and Tranqui-
 lity) it may justly be feared that
 in fundry parts of this Realm,
 there want not men of unquiet
 and Factious Spirits, who instead
 of preaching the pure Word of
 God, and building up the Peo-
 ple in Faith and Holiness, will
 (if they be not restrained) make
 it a great part of their Business
 to beget in the minds of their
 Hearers an evil Opinion of their
 Governours, by insinuating Fears
 and Jealousies, to dispose them
 to Discontent, and to season
 them with such unsound and
 dangerous Principles as may lead
 them into Disobedience, Schism,

and Rebellion: And whereas also sundry young Divines and Preachers, either out of a Spirit of Contention and Contradiction, or in a vain Ostentation of their Learning, take upon them in their popular Sermons, to handle the deep Points of Gods Eternal Councils and Decrees, or to meddle with the Affairs of State and Government, or to wrangle about Forms and Gestures, and other fruitless Disputes and Controversies, serving rather to amuse than profit the Hearers; which is done for the most part, and with the greatest Confidence, by such persons as least understand them: We out of our Princely Care and Zeal
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for the Honour of God, the Advancement of Piety, Peace, and true Religion, and for the preventing for the future, as much as lieth in Us, the many and great Inconveniencies & Mischiefs that will unavoidably ensue, if a timely stop be not given to these and the like growing Abuses; Do, according to the Examples of several of Our Predecessors of blessed Memory, by these Our special Letters straitly Charge and Command you, to use your utmost Care and Diligence that these Directions, which upon long and serious Consideration, Our late Dear Brother thought good to give concerning Preachers, and which We upon

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like Consideration have approved and caused to be Reprinted, and herewith sent unto you, be from henceforth duly and strictly observed by all the Bishops and others concerned therein within your Provinces. And to this end Our Will and Pleasure is, That you forthwith send them Copies of these Our Directions, to be by them speedily communicated to every Parson, Vicar, Curate, Lecturer, and Preacher in every Cathedral, Collegiate, and Parish Church within their several Diocesses; And that you earnestly require them to imploy their utmost endeavour for the due Observation of the same whereof We shall
still expect

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expect a strict Account, both of
you, and every one of them:
And these Our Letters shall be
your sufficient Warrant and Dis-
charge in that behalf.

*Given at Our Court at White-
hall, the Fifth day of March
1685. in the Second Year of
Our Reign,*

By His Majesties Command,

SUNDERLAND P.

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DIRECTIONS

Concerning

PREACHERS.

I. **T**hat no Preachers in their Sermons presume to meddle with Matters of State, to Model new Governments, or take upon them to Declare, Limit, or Bound out the Power and Authority of Sovereign Princes, or to State and Determine the Differences between Princes and People; But that upon all good Occasions they faithfully Instruct the people in their Bounden duty of Subjection and obedience to their Governours, Superiour and Subordinate of all

all sorts, and to the Established Laws according to the Word of God, and the Doctrine of the Church of England, as it is contained in the Homilies of Obedience, and the Articles of Religion set forth by publick Authority.

II. That they be Admonished not to spend their Time, and Study in the Search of Abstruse and Speculative Points, especially in and about the deep points of Election and Reprobation, together with the Incomprehensible manner of the Concurrence of Gods free Grace, and Mans free Will, and such other Controversies as depend thereupon: But, however that they presume not positively, and Doctrinally to determine any thing concerning the same.

III. That they forbear in their Sermons ordinarily and causelessly to enter upon the handling of any other Controversies of less Moment and Difficulty; But whensoever they are occasioned by Invitation

Inbitation from the Text they preach upon, or that in Regard of the Audito-ry they preach unto, it may seem Re-quisite or Expedient so to do; That in such cases they do it with all Modesty, Gravity, and Candour, Asserting the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England, from the Cavils and Objec-tions of such as are Adversaries to ei-ther, without Bitterness, Railing, Fear-ing, or other unnecessary or unseemly provocation.

IV. That for the more Edifying of the people in Faith and Godliness (the aforesaid abuses laid aside) all Mini-sters and Preachers in their severall re-spective Cures shall not onely diligently apply themselves to catechise the young-er sort according as in the Book of Com-mon Prayer is appointed; But also shall in their ordinary Sermons Insist chiefly upon Catechetical Doctrines (wherein are contained all the necessa-ry and undoubted Verities of Christian Religion

Religion) declaring withall unto their
 Congregations what Influences such
 Doctrines ought to have into their lives
 and conversations, and stirring them
 up Effectually, as well by their Exam-
 ples as their Doctrines, to the practice
 of such Religious and Moral Duties as
 are the proper Results of the said Do-
 ctrines, as Self-denial, Contempt of
 the World, Humility, Patience, Meek-
 nesses, Temperance, Justice, Mercy, O-
 bedience, and the likes: And to a Detes-
 tation & Shunning of Sin, especially
 such Sins as are so rife among us,
 and common to the Age we Live in:
 such are those usually Stiled the Seven
 Deadly ones, in short, all kind of De-
 bauchery, Sensuality, Rebellion, Pro-
 faness, Atheism, and the like. And be-
 cause the late Licentious Times have
 Corrupted Religion even in the very
 Roots and Foundations, That where
 there is an Afternoons Exercise, it be
 especially Spent either in Explaining
 some part of the Church-Catechism, or
 in

in Preaching upon some such Text of Scripture, as will properly and Naturally lead to the handling of something Contained in it, or may Conduce to the Exposition of the Liturgy, & Prayers of the Church (as Occasion shall be offered) the onely cause they grew into Contempt amongst the people being this, that They were not Understood. That also the Minister as often as Conveniently he can, Read the Prayers himself; and when he cannot do so, he procure or provide some fit person in Holy Orders, who may do it, with that Gravity, Distinctness, Devotion and Reverence as becomes so Holy an Action: And whensoever by Reason of his Infirmitie or the Concurrence of other offices, the time may seem too short, or he unable to perform the Office of both Prayers and Sermon at length, he rather shorten his Discourse or Sermon, then Omit any thing of the Prayers, lest he Incur the penalty of the Act for Uniformity, Requiring them to be Read
according

according as the Book Directs.

V. And further Our Will and pleasure is, That all Ministers within these several Cures, be Injoynd publickly to Read over unto the people, such Canons as are or shall be in Force at least once, and the Thirtie nine Articles twice every Year, to the End they may the better understand, and be more thoroughly Acquainted with the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England, and not so easily drawn away from it as formerly they have been.

VI. Since Preaching was not Anciently the Work of every Priest, but was Restrained to the choicest Persons for Gravity, Prudence, and Learning: The Archbishops and Bishops of this Kingdom are to take great Care whom they Licence to Preach, and that all Grants and Licences of this kind heretofore made by any Chanceller, Officer, Commissary or other Secular person

person (who are presumed not to be so Competent Judges in Matters of this Nature) be accounted Void and Null, unless the same shall likewise be allowed by the Archbishop, or the Bishop of the Diocess, & that all Licences of Preachers hereafter to be made or granted by any Archbishop or Bishop, shall be onely during pleasure, otherwise to be void to all intents and purposes, as if the same had never been made nor granted.

VII. Lastly that for the better Observing of the Lords Day, too much neglected of late, they shall, as by often and serious Admonitions and sharp reproofs, endeavour to draw off people from such Idle, Debauched, and Profane Courses as dishonour God, bring a Scandal on Religion, and Contempt on the Laws and Authority Ecclesiastical and Civil, so shall they very earnestly perswade them to frequent Divine Service on the Lords Day and other Festivals appointed by the Church

to be kept Solemn ; And in case any person shall resort unto any Taverns or Ale-houses , or use any unlawful Sports and exercises on such days, the Minister shall exhort those which are in Authority in their several Parishes and Congregations, carefully to look after all such Offenders in any kind whatsoever, together with all those that Abett, Receive or Entertain them, that they may be proceeded against according to the Laws, and Quality of their Offences, that all such Disorders may for the Time to come be prevented.

Given at Our Court at *Whitehall*, the Fifth Day of *March*, 1685. In the Second Year of Our Reign.

By His Majesties Command.

Sunderland. P.

Dublin, Re-printed, by *Andrew Crook*, and *Samuel Helsham*, Assigns of *Benjamin Tooke*, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Majesty, and are to be Sold by *Andrew Crook*, at the Printing-House on *Ormond-Key*, and *Samuel Helsham* at the *Colledge - Arms* in *Castle-Street* 1686.

